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C O N F I D E N T I A L ASUNCION 000470

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2033  
TAGS: [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [MOPS](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PA](#)  
SUBJECT: PARAGUAY GOING GLOBAL WITH PEACEKEEPING UNIT

Classified By: A/DCM John Beed for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (C) The 175-member Paraguayan United Nations Peace Keeping Operations Multi-Role Engineer Company -- Paraguay's first unit dedicated to global peacekeeping under its own command -- celebrated its official dedication June 6. Once it deploys in the second half of 2008, the unit will join 1,662 Paraguayan peacekeepers who have served since 2001 as UN observers in over 20 peacekeeping operations in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Joint Peace Operations Training Center Commander Ruben Dario Pena recognized the USG for its tremendous support for the unit through the Global Peace Operations Initiative Program. The unit still needs vehicles, equipment, and additional training before it is ready to deploy overseas; however, the Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) committed USD 2.13 million in GPOI funds to provide the unit with the financial and technical resources it needs to achieve this objective. Although now reliant on USG support, the PKO unit will earn income from the UN once deployed. The new PKO unit serves a model for military-to-military cooperation, because it enables the U.S. and Paraguayan militaries to work closely together to professionalize Paraguay's military and enhance strategic capabilities. END SUMMARY.

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PEACEKEEPING UNIT STANDING UP  
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¶2. (SBU) The 175-member Paraguayan United Nations Peace Keeping Operations Multi-Role Engineer Company (PKO unit) -- Paraguay's first unit dedicated to global peacekeeping under its own command -- celebrated its official dedication June 6 at the Paraguayan Military Forces' Joint Peace Operations Training Center (CECOPAZ). The dedication ceremony marked the end of a three-month intensive PKO training program, and the start of the unit's final preparations to deploy overseas for the first time this year. Once the unit completes its training requirements and fielding of vehicles and equipment, the Paraguayan government will solicit a mandate from the UN to participate in a peacekeeping mission. Informal discussions between the UN and the Paraguayan government indicate three possible deployments: the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH); the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNFIL); and the UN Assistance Mission in Darfur (UNAMID).

¶3. (U) Once it deploys in the second half of 2008, the PKO unit will join 1,662 Paraguayan peacekeepers who have served since 2001 as UN observers in over 20 peacekeeping operations in Latin America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. Paraguay now has 112 peacekeepers under deployment, including 31 peacekeepers

supporting the Brazilian contingent to MINUSTAH; 15 Paraguayan peacekeepers serving in Cyprus (UNFICYP) under Argentine authority; one peacekeeper deployed to the UN Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); and military observers serving at all levels with various missions in Africa.

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USG FUNDING KEY TO SUCCESS  
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¶4. (SBU) CECOPAZ Commander Ruben Dario Pena recognized the USG for its tremendous support for the unit through the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) Program. The Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC) Paraguay secured USD 4.1 million in GPOI funding for Paraguay since August 2006 to refurbish CECOPAZ' facilities and train and equip the PKO unit. The unit will be capable of performing small-scale vertical engineering, well drilling, and water purification -- skills critically needed by peacekeepers. The Massachusetts Army National Guard (MANG), which maintains a close bilateral partnership with the Paraguayan Military Forces as part of the State Partnership Program (SPP), provided additional Subject Matter Expert Exchanges (SMEE) to unit personnel. (NOTE: The Brazilian and Argentine militaries also work with CECOPAZ and have contributed equipment and training to support Paraguay's existing peacekeeping operations. Although the ODC has not collaborated with the Brazilians or Argentines at CECOPAZ, their support has been compatible with Post's mission. END NOTE.)

¶5. (C) The PKO unit still needs vehicles, equipment, and additional training before it is ready to deploy overseas. The ODC committed USD 2.13 million in GPOI funds to provide the unit with the financial and technical resources it needs to achieve this objective. CECOPAZ has 11 armored personnel vehicles and 17 medium-armored vehicles in working condition. ODC is working to provide the unit with one fuel truck, one water truck, three heavy-duty and four light-duty trucks, and one forklift totaling about USD 950,000 in GPOI funds. ODC will equip the unit with approximately USD 570,000 in unit field equipment, individual equipment, body armor, and engineering site equipment. ODC also committed about USD 503,000 in GPOI funding to pay for the renovation of CECOPAZ buildings, including its headquarters, operations center, training facility, mess hall, barracks, and maintenance facility. In addition, ODC committed about USD 57,000 in GPOI funds to pay for training -- including TDY support -- and about USD 48,000 in GPOI funds to pay for furniture, office equipment, tools, and supplies. To date, the GPOI program in Paraguay produced 374 trained personnel (21 direct trainees and 353 indirect trainees).

¶6. (SBU) Although now reliant on USG support, the PKO unit will earn income from the UN once deployed. The unit is the first of three PKO units the Paraguayan government plans to establish under the GPOI Program. If successful, the government will establish by 2010 a residual presence overseas by simultaneously training, recovering, refitting, and deploying these PKO units. Post is optimistic that the new PKO unit will be ready to deploy on its first overseas mission this year and will be self-sufficient by 2010.

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COMMENT  
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¶7. (C) COMMENT: The new PKO unit serves a model for military-to-military cooperation, because it enables the U.S. and Paraguayan militaries to work closely together to professionalize Paraguay's military and enhance strategic capabilities. Post will draw on the PKO unit as an example of successful bilateral cooperation as it engages the Lugo administration. END COMMENT.

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